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Ex-CIA agent to probe riots

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WASHINGTON — President Johnson's riot commission Friday selected a former officer of the Central Intelligence Agency to find out whether recent city riots were planned.

He is Milan Carl Miskovsky, now a Treasury Department lawyer, who was with the CIA from 1951 to 1964, first as an intelligence officer and later as assistant general counsel.

Commission Chairman Otto Kerner announced the selection of Miskovsky at a White House press conference and said the former CIA agent would oversee "independent inquiries" to determine whether a conspiracy was involved in riots that tore through a score of cities this summer.

Officially, Miskovsky, who

won the CIA's Certificate of Merit in 1962 and Medal of Merit in 1964, will have the title "director of investigations for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders." It was reported that his job will be to supervise the commission's investigation — under way since late July — and coordinate the probe with information being gathered by the Justice Department and state and local police agencies.

In announcing the appointment, Kerner, the governor of Illinois, said it "seems logical" that there was a conspiracy behind the riots. But he said the commission has yet to find any evidence that this was the case. Kerner did not mention it, but in testimony last month before the commission, FBI Director J.

Edgar Hoover said he was convinced there was no evidence of a conspiracy to foment riots.

Kerner said the 11-member commission, which has heard testimony from 75 witnesses, including the mayors of Newark and Detroit — cities hardest hit by this year's riots — would deliver its interim report to President Johnson "as soon as possible" with recommendations for "immediate help" to thwart further civil disorders.

Rather than recommend new legislation, the commission in its interim report probably will call for "short-range" assistance to low-income areas from such sources as private industry and universities which are located within the cities, Kerner said.

Saying that most of the recent violence began with rock-throwing by Negro youths 14-16 years old, Kerner said that universities, in particular, should take a "greater interest" in encouraging students to tutor potential high-school dropouts.

Not until the psychic pattern of inferiority among ghetto Negroes is eradicated, will the cities be free of the threat of more civil disorders, Kerner said. The Illinois governor was accompanied at the White House news conference by Mayor John Lindsay of New York City, who is vice-chairman of the commission.

Neither Kerner, a Democrat, nor Lindsay, a Republican, referred to urban legislation now pending before Congress.